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April 14, 2004

**Via Electronic Filing**

Ms. Marlene H. Dortch, Secretary  
Federal Communications Commission  
445 12th Street, S.W., TW-A325  
Washington, D.C. 20554

**RE: *Public Interest Obligations of Television Broadcast Licensees, MM Docket No. 99-360***  
***Digital Carriage Rules, CS Docket No. 98-120***  
***Second Periodic Review of the Commission's Rules and Policies Affecting the***  
***Conversion to Digital Television, MB Docket No. 03-15***

Dear Ms. Dortch:

Pursuant to section 1.1206 (b)(2) of the Commission's rules, we hereby submit this notice regarding an *ex parte* meeting in the above-referenced proceedings.

On Tuesday April 13, 2004 representatives of several public interest groups met with FCC Commissioner Kevin J. Martin and his Legal Advisor on Media Issues, Catherine Crutcher Bohigian. Attending the meeting were Meredith McGehee, Executive Director of the Alliance for Better Campaigns; Gloria Tristani, Managing Director of the Office of Communications of the United Church of Christ, Inc.; Jeff Chester, Executive Director of the Center for Digital Democracy; Celia Wexler, Director of Research of Common Cause; and Angela Campbell, James Bachtell and Cynthia Morikone with the Institute for Public Representation at Georgetown University Law Center.

The representatives discussed with the Commissioner and Ms. Bohigian the need to clarify the public interest obligations of broadcasters and proposed the attached processing guidelines submitted to the Media Bureau on April 7, 2004. The group also mentioned several studies and reports documenting the current lack of local civic and electoral affairs programming—problems that have new implications in a digital television environment. Mentioned specifically was the attached study performed recently by Stanford University's Graduate Program in Journalism that found news organizations in the San Francisco Bay Area did not adequately cover political campaigns before an election. Also discussed was the need to define broadcasters' public

interest obligations prior to any decision on multicasting must-carry in order to best serve the public interest.

In accordance with the Commission's rules, this *ex parte* notice is being filed electronically in the above referenced dockets. If you have any questions regarding this filing, please do not hesitate to contact me at (202) 662-9535.

Respectfully Submitted,

/s/

James A. Bachtell

Attachments